

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EGEN, EIND, ETEL, EEC

SUBJECT: EC COMPUTER POLICY -- THE COMMISSION MOVES AHEAD

REF: A. TRANSMITTAL SLIP TO STATE, EUR/RPE AND COMMERCE

DATED FEB. 21, 1975

B. USEC A-384, DEC. 12, 1974

C. EC BRUSSELS 4920, 1974

1. SUMMARY: THE COMMISSION HAS SENT THE EC COUNCIL A REQUEST FOR FINANCING FOR FIVE DATA PROCESSING APPLICATION STUDIES. THE COMMISSION HAS EMPHASIZED THAT THE PURPOSE OF THE PROJECTS IS TO STRENGTHEN "EUROPEAN" INDUSTRY BUT THERE IS A DIFFERENCE OF OPINION IN THE MEMBER STATES WHETHER THIS MEANS ONLY FIRMS CONTROLLED BY EUROPEAN CAPITAL OR FIRMS MANUFACTURING IN EUROPE REGARDLESS OF THEIR HOME BASE. THE WAY IN WHICH THE PROJECTS WILL BE REVIEWED BY THE COUNCIL, AS WELL AS THE SPEED WITH WHICH THEY WILL BE CONSIDERED, IS STILL UNCERTAIN. END SUMMARY

2. ON FEB. 21, 1975, THE MISSION SENT THE DEPARTMENT (EUR/RPE) AND COMMERCE (A. DAUMAN) A DRAFT COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EC COUNCIL WHICH CONTAINS THE FIRST SPECIFIC PROPOSALS TO THE COUNCIL IN
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RESPONSE TO THE COUNCIL RESOLUTION OF JUNE 1974 ON

DATA PROCESSING (SEE REFTTEL C). (THE FINAL VERSION OF THE COMMUNICATION WE UNDERSTAND, IS ALMOST THE SAME AS THE DRAFT.) ENTITLED "INITIAL PROPOSALS FOR PRIORITY PROJECTS IN DATA PROCESSING", IT DESCRIBES THE FIVE DATA PROCESSING APPLICATION PROJECTS REPORTED ON IN REFERENCE B, AND PROPOSES DRAFT COUNCIL DECISIONS APPROVING THE PROJECT, THEIR FINANCING AND A CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE ON DATA PROCESSING. IT ALSO PROVIDES A STATUS REPORT ON OTHER ASPECTS OF THE EC COMPUTER POLICY.

3. THE PROJECTS ARE A DEVELOPMENT STUDY FOR A DATA BANK MATCHING HUMAN ORGANS AND BLOOD, AND FOUR-IN-DEPTH EXPLORATORY STUDIES COVERING 1) THE REQUIREMENTS FOR DATA PROCESSING SYSTEMS FOR INFORMATION ON EC IMPORTS/EXPORTS AND COMMON AGRICULTURAL POLICY MANAGEMENT; 2) THE REQUIREMENTS FOR AN EC-WIDE LEGAL DOCUMENT RETRIEVAL SYSTEM; 3) THE FEASIBILITY AND JUSTIFICATION FOR DEVELOPING DESIGN SPECIFICATIONS FOR A COMPUTERIZED EUROPEAN AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL SYSTEM IN THE 1980S AND 4) AN ASSESSMENT OF THE ECONOMIC BENEFITS OF A DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM IN COMPUTER-AIDED DESIGN TECHNIQUES. THE STUDIES WILL REQUIRE BETWEEN 18 MONTHS AND TWO YEARS TO COMPLETE AND TOTAL EXPENDITURES OF 4 MILLION UNITS OF ACCOUNT ARE PROPOSED. A "CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE" MADE UP OF EXPERTS FROM THE MEMBER STATES IS PROPOSED TO ASSIST THE COMMISSION IN OVERSEEING THE PROJECTS AND WILL MAKE MAJOR DECISIONS SUCH AS WHICH FIRMS SHOULD BE AWARDED STUDY CONTRACTS. A "TECHNICAL COMMITTEE," MADE UP OF EXPERTS SELECTED FROM AMONG THE EVENTUAL USERS OF THE PROPOSED PROJECTS, WILL WORK WITH THE PROJECT LEADER, THE INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBLE FOR A PROJECT, ON TECHNICAL ISSUES. WE HAVE BEEN TOLD THAT THE IRISH, WHO CURRENTLY HOLD THE EC COUNCIL PRESIDENCY, HAVE NOT YET DECIDED ON WHETHER THE COMMUNICATION SHOULD BE INITIALLY DISCUSSED BY CREST, THE EC'S PERMANENT SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE OR BY AN AD HOC COUNCIL LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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WORKING GROUP, NOR ON THE PACE AT WHICH THE DISCUSSIONS SHOULD TAKE PLACE.

4. COMMENT: WHILE THE EC COUNCIL REVIEW OF THE COMMUNICATION WILL TAKE SOME TIME ITS CONTENT RAISES IMPORTANT QUESTIONS FOR US INTERESTS BECAUSE OF POSSIBLE DISCRIMINATORY APPLICATION. WE ASKED QUEQUIN OF THE EC COMMISSION DIRECTORATE GENERAL

FOR INDUSTRY WHETHER US EDP FIRMS EITHER PRODUCING IN EUROPE OR EXPORTING TO EUROPE CAN PARTICIPATE IN A) THE PROJECT STUDIES AND B) EVENTUALLY SUPPLY HARDWARE IF THE STUDIES DEVELOP PROJECTS THAT WILL BE ACCEPTABLE TO THE MEMBER STATES. HE SAID THAT THE COMMISSION WOULD LIKE THE STUDIES TO BE PERFORMED BY CONSORTIA OF EUROPEAN SOFTWARE AND SERVICE COMPANIES BUT THAT US PARTICIPANTS IN SUCH CONSORTIA ARE NOT EXCLUDED. WE SHALL FOLLOW THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE COMMUNICATION IN THE EC COUNCIL AND INFORM THE DEPARTMENT OF PRACTICAL DETAILS WHICH MIGHT BE PASSED ON TH US FIRMS BY COMMERCE, ON WHEN, HOW AND WITH WHON US FIRMS MIGHT MAKE CONTACT.

5. REGARDING EVENTUAL HARDWARE PURCHASES, THE THRUST OF THE COMMUNICATION IS TO AID THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE EUROPEAN COMPUTER INDUSTRY. WHILE NOT EXPLICIT IN THE DOCUMENT, QUEQUIN SAYS THE COMMISSION'S DEFINITION OF "EUROPEAN" IS A FIRM WITH ITS DECISION MAKING CENTER IN EUROPE. WHEN WE EXPRESSED CONCERN ABOUT DISCRIMINATORY IMPLICATIONS OF THE COMMUNICATION GIVEN THIS DEFINITION, HE REPLIED THAT ANY HARDWARE ACQUISITION WAS A LONG WAY OFF, IF INDEED, THE PROJECTS WOULD MATERIALIZE AT ALL. ON AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL, WHICH IS THE PROJECT MOST CLEARLY DIRECTED TOWARDS FOSTERING PURCHASES OF "EUROPEAN" EQUIPMENT, QUEQUIN STATED THAT SECURITY WAS SO IMPORTANT HE COULD NOT SEE HOW THE RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITIES COULD PURCHASE ANYTHING BUT THE MOST TRUSTWORTHY MATERIAL REGARDLESS OF ORIGIN. HOWEVER, HE EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT "EUROPEAN" EQUIPMENT WOULD SATISFY REQUIREMENTS AND ULTIMATELY BE SELECTED. HE NOTED THE TIME FRAME FOR HARDWARE PURCHASING ON THIS PROJECT WOULD BE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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1980-1985, IMPLYING THERE WAS NO NEED FOR ALARM.

6. A FURTHER AND CRUCIAL QUESTION IS MEMBER STATE ATTITUDES TOWARD THE RESTRICTIVE DEFINITION OF "EUROPEAN" NOTED IN PARA 5 ABOVE. DURING A DISCUSSION IN THE COMMITTEE OF PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVES (COREPER) LAST JUNE, THE IRISH STRONGLY OBJECTED TO THE COMMISSION'S DEFINITION AND A CONTACT IN THE IRISH PERMANENT DELEGATION TOLD US THAT NEITHER THEY NOR OTHER SMALL MEMBER STATES WOULD ACCEPT DISCRIMINATION AGAINST US FIRMS MANUFACTURING IN THE EC. AN ITALIAN CONTACT ECHOED THESE SENTIMENTS AND A GERMAN PERMREP CONTACT SAW SUCH DISCRIMINATION AS BEING NEITHER LEGAL UNDER THE ROME TREATY NOR FEASIBLE IN THE EDF FIELD. MYERSON

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